



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).



FIG. 1. THE PYRAMID OF AMENEMHAT I. FROM THE SOUTHWEST, SHOWING THE SITE OF THE CEMETERY ON THE PLATEAU TO THE LEFT (WEST) OF THE PYRAMID IN THE FOREGROUND, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE EXPEDITION

## THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION \*

III



FIG. 2. HEAD OF WOODEN STATUETTE, FROM LISHT. 12TH DYNASTY

IN the last report of the excavation of the Pyramid-Temple of Amenemhat I., at Lisht, by the Museum Expedition the past season, only brief mention could be made of the work which had been carried on simultaneously on the cemetery west of the pyramid, where

\*The first report on the results of the expedition undertaken by the Museum will be found in the Bulletin for April, the second in the July number, 1907.

the tombs had been found of prominent personages of the reigns of Amenemhat I. and succeeding kings of the twelfth dynasty (about 2000-1750 B. C.). This cemetery covers the western part of the small plateau, on the eastern edge of which the pyramid stands, and also extends down the slope on the south to the lower level of the desert beyond (see fig. 1). In determining the extent of the cemetery, work was begun on this southern slope and, after recording and clearing the tombs up to the crest of the hill, the excavation of those on the top of the plateau was continued until it became necessary to bring the season's work to an end. Altogether, about one hundred tombs were opened and, in the part of the cemetery which is left, probably several times that number still remain to be examined. All those which have yet been opened date from the early part of the twelfth dynasty, and, aside from a few "intrusive" burials of later date, the use of the cemetery seems to have been confined to the twelfth dynasty alone.

The site showed no traces of disturbance in modern times but, as is usually the case in Egyptian cemeteries, most of the burial chambers had been opened and plundered to some degree in ancient times. In the same way the superstructures of the tombs had mostly disappeared, owing to their destruction for building material in succeeding periods, but many fragments remained to show the quality of the con-

struction and of the relief sculpture with which the walls of their chambers had been covered. The tombs, as they are preserved therefore, consist of a perpendicular shaft, cut down through the bed-rock of the plateau, and one or more rock-cut chambers opening out of the shaft at the bottom. The depth of the shaft varies, from 3 or 4 m. in the smaller tombs to as much as 22 m. (70 ft.) in the largest—in one of the latter a long corridor leading from the bottom of the shaft to a series of chambers beyond.

The progress of the excavation of the cemetery led in time to the discovery of one tomb—that of a lady named Senbtet—which had escaped all but a slight contemporary disturbance, and which yielded some of the most important results of the year's work. Owing to the number and elaborate nature of the objects which it contained, Mr. Mace and Mr. Winlock, who carried out the recording and clearing of the tomb, were engaged for more than two months in the work. The following description of the tomb is contributed by Mr. Mace in his report:

"This tomb consisted of a vertical shaft, eight meters long, oriented east and west. At the bottom, on the west side, the shaft opened into a large offering chamber, 145 cm. high, and within this again, on the north side, there was a long narrow chamber which served for the actual burial.

The shaft was filled, from the top to within about 50 cm. of the bottom, with large rough blocks of stone, and it was this fact which first suggested the possibility that there might be an untouched burial below, the shaft-filling of the ordinary plundered tomb consisting usually of debris and drift sand. The door at the bottom of the shaft, however, was not blocked in any way, and the filling had therefore drifted into the chamber, the slope thus formed reaching almost to its further side, while an additional pile of stones and rubbish, probably from the original filling, was heaped up at the entrance of the inner chamber, and over the end of the coffin. It seemed clear at first sight that the tomb had been entered at some time subsequent to the burial, and as

the chamber was gradually cleared the fact became increasingly evident. Underneath the pile of rubbish at the doorway there were a number of scattered bricks which obviously belonged to the original blocking, while just outside the doorway there was a wooden box upside down, which contained the remains of what may once have been a wig. The pottery which covered the floor had been pushed out of place and heaped up in the centre of the chamber. The furniture of the inner chamber seemed at first to be intact, though this was difficult to ascertain certainly as the wood of the outer coffin had become rotten, and the coffin itself had collapsed. Closer examination, however, showed that the gold leaf from this outer coffin had been carefully stripped off, though that on the inner coffin and on the Canopic box was still intact. Curiously enough this seems to have been the sum total of damage done, and we must suppose that the plunderers were disturbed before they had time to seek further, and went off with the gold which they had secured, and possibly the set of stone toilet vases which are usually found with burials of this class.

So much for the condition in which the tomb was found: we pass now to a description of its actual contents. The outer chamber seems to have contained nothing but pottery. There were in all one hundred and eight pieces, mostly tiny model vases and saucers. With them there were several large dishes or platters, containing offerings of various kinds—ducks, joints of beef, etc., of the types which we see so frequently represented on the monuments. The inner chamber, as we have said, was practically intact (see fig. 3, a view taken after the ruins of the outer coffin had been removed). The coffin lay on the west side of the chamber, close to the west wall, the space between the coffin and the east wall being occupied by a long narrow box, which contained a mace-head of quartz crystal, the remains of two or three wooden staves, and two small wooden boxes in the form of shrines, containing shapeless bundles of decayed cloth. Underneath the coffin, and projecting from its end (see fig. 3), were two poles, which served as skids on

which the coffin was pushed into place. The Canopic niche, following the usual custom, was on the east side of the chamber. The box which contained the vases was of wood, in shape almost identical with the coffin, and was decorated with

ably cedar, and, as far as the wood was concerned, was in almost perfect condition. Down the centre of the lid there was a broad band of gold leaf with an incised inscription giving the names of the person for whom the tomb was con-

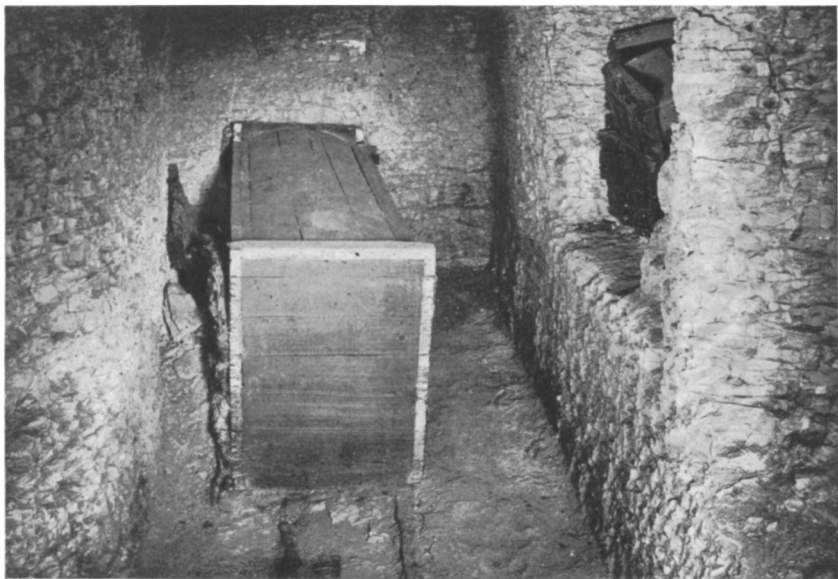


FIG. 3. BURIAL CHAMBER AND COFFIN OF SENBTES.  
ON THE RIGHT, THE CANOPIC NICHE AND BOX

strips of gold leaf around the rim of the lid and down the corners, and with painted bands of inscription now almost indecipherable. The vases were of alabaster, with painted wooden heads, and contained what we may assume to have been the internal organs of the body, wrapped in cloth.

No fewer than three coffins were considered necessary for the housing of the body. Of these the outer one was, as we have stated, in very bad condition, crumbling almost to powder when touched; it was only possible to note its approximate measurements, and the fact that it had, in addition to the bands of gold foil already mentioned, a painted band of inscription down the center of the lid, vertical bands on the sides, and an eye-panel similar in design to the one on the second coffin. The second coffin was of hard wood, prob-

structed—Senbtès and Hapisit—while round the top edge of the coffin and down the corners there were narrower bands of the same material. At the north end of the east side of the coffin there was a gilded eye-panel, with inlaid eyes of alabaster and obsidian. Unfortunately the gold-leaf on this coffin had not been glued directly on to the wood, a thin layer of plaster being interposed: consequently it was for the most part hanging loose, and had to be restuck inch by inch before the coffin could be moved. On removing the lid the coffin was found to be filled, almost to the top, with fringed shawls, some ten or twelve in number, each folded double and laid loose over the innermost coffin (see fig. 4). Between the layers of these shawls there were a number of ceremonial staves, disposed as follows (see fig. 5):



FIG. 4. COFFIN OF SENBTES, AFTER REMOVAL OF LID



FIG. 5. COFFIN OF SENBTES, AFTER REMOVAL OF SHAWLS,  
SHOWING CEREMONIAL STAVES

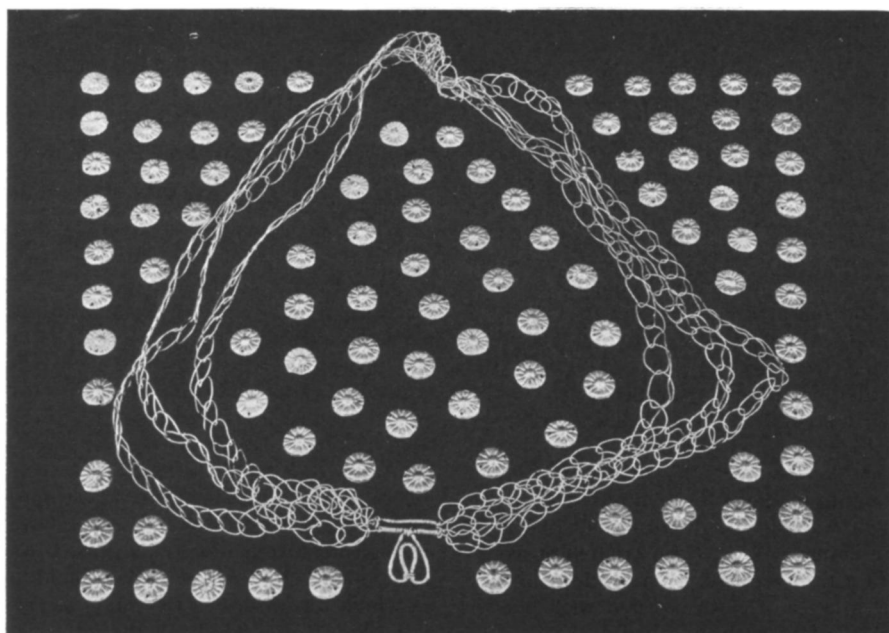


FIG. 6. GOLD CIRCLET AND ROSETTES OF SENBTES

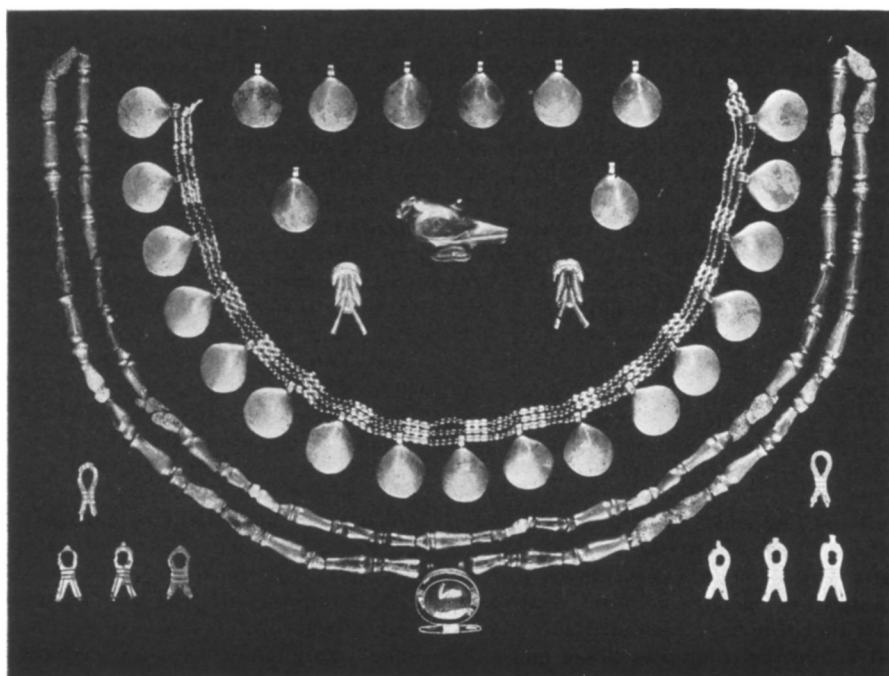


FIG. 7. SOME OF THE NECKLACES AND OTHER ORNAMENTS OF SENBTES

On the right side of the coffin, a curious double staff of unknown use.

On the left side of the coffin, one plain staff, one staff with forked bottom, two bows, one staff with crooked handle, one straight *uas*-head staff, one curly *uas*-head staff, one mace with wooden handle and alabaster head, one whip. This latter belongs to a type which is well known in the twelfth dynasty, but has very rarely been found in perfect condition. The handle and flail-ends are of wood; the long cylindrical heads are of blue pottery, ringed with gold at the ends; and the smaller beads are of carnelian and blue-glazed pottery, also with gold rings (see fig. 8).

The removal of the staves and cloth brought to light the innermost coffin, which was of human form, and of elaborate design. It was constructed of wood, with a thin wash of pitch inside, and outside a layer of cloth covered with plaster and overlaid with gold leaf.

The face-mask was of thicker plaster, carefully modelled, with inlaid eyes of alabaster and obsidian, set in silver frames. At the neck there was a panel of actual beads—carnelian and glaze—set into the plaster, with conventional wig curls on either side, done in blue paste with a carnelian disc at the extremities of each curl. The lid had been fastened to the body of the coffin by a system of bronze pins and catches, so ingenious in construction that nothing short of main force would have sufficed to open it. Unfortunately it was made of soft wood, which had rotted away, so that only measurements and notes on its construction and scheme of ornamentation could be secured. It was laid on its side, with the face towards the eye-panels of the outer coffins.

Immediately inside this third coffin there was a thick layer of pitch, which must have been poured on after the body had been laid in position, just prior to the burial, for the pitch had for the most part run down to the left side of the body, and must therefore have been introduced only just before the coffin was closed and laid on its side. In this pitch layer were found the most valuable of the personal orna-

ments, which must have been placed on the body outside the final wrappings, and been dragged out of position by the pitch as it ran.

They consisted of a circlet, from the head,—formed of three coils of twisted gold wire ending in an ornament over the forehead,—and a series of ninety-eight gold rosettes which had been dotted over the wig and fastened to its separate strands (see fig. 6); a necklace of tiny gold, carnelian and beryl beads with gold shell pendants (see fig. 7); a second necklace of tiny brown beads with girdle-tie pendants of gold, silver, carnelian, beryl and ivory; and bracelets (?) of tiny brown beads, with, at intervals, double heart-amulets of gold, carnelian, beryl and ivory. Just inside this pitch layer, and outside the wrappings of the body, there was a very elaborate bead girdle, fastened on the right side with a plaque of plaster covered with gold foil, on which was inscribed the name *Senbtet*, and, close to the hands on the left side, a small dagger in a wooden sheath decorated with gold.

The body was wrapped in several thicknesses of cloth. The innermost wrapping of all was a shawl of extraordinarily fine texture, averaging 50x30 threads to the centimetre. The outer wrappings consisted of alternate shawls and bandages, the cloth of the latter being of much coarser quality, only averaging 40x16 threads to the centimetre. The legs and arms were wrapped separately. Inside these wrappings, and separated from each other by the various layers of cloth, there were a number of other personal ornaments: two elaborate bead collars of carnelian, glazed-pottery and gilt plaster; a bronze pectoral covered with gold foil; a necklace of bottle-shaped beads made of ivory, carnelian, green stone, and glazed-pottery (?) covered with gold foil, with a carnelian and gold cloisonné pendant (see fig. 7); a carnelian hawk amulet (see fig. 7); a small cane covered with bead work and tipped with gold; and behind the head a large disc of hard paste or some similar material, which may perhaps be the prototype of the later inscribed hypcephalus.

The body was on its left side, with its head to the north and face east. It was well preserved, and on closer examination showed clear traces of mummification, a fact of extreme archaeological importance. It has been generally accepted as probable that a partial mummification, at any rate, was practiced as early as the twelfth dynasty, or even earlier; but it is unusual to find more than the bare skeleton, and, until this year, there has been no definitely recorded case of pre-eighteenth dynasty mummification.

With a view to the importance of the burial the body was kept intact as far as possible and submitted to Dr. Elliot-Smith, professor of anatomy at the Cairo School of Medicine, from whose report the following notes are taken. The body is that of a very small, and exceedingly slenderly built woman of about 50 years of age. The viscera had been removed through an incision 21 cm. long parallel to the left Poupart's ligament—obliquely across left hypogastric and iliac regions—the upper end being just above the level of the iliac crest and 3 cm. in front of it. The skin adjoining the wound, and the liver stuffed into it are smeared with a polished yellowish material, which when burnt emits a strong resinous odor. The body is packed with a series of wads of linen, some of which are solidified

into resinous masses. In the upper part of the chest there is a loose mass, consisting of a hollow viscus, whose cavities are packed with wads of linen. From an examination of its form there can be little doubt that it is the heart. In removing the viscera the heart must have been detached, then stuffed with linen and returned to the body. No attempt was made to remove

the brain, nor to pack the mouth or nose. A little resin had been placed in front of the eyes and the eyelid drawn over it so as partially to enclose it. The skull is long, broad and flat; the coronal and sagittal sutures are almost completely closed, and yet the small regular teeth are remarkably little worn, with the exception of the incisors. The face is very small and infantile, the eyes large and round, the nose well-proportioned, being neither aquiline nor flat."

In addition to the material of almost unique character which this tomb of Senbtet contained, the excavation of

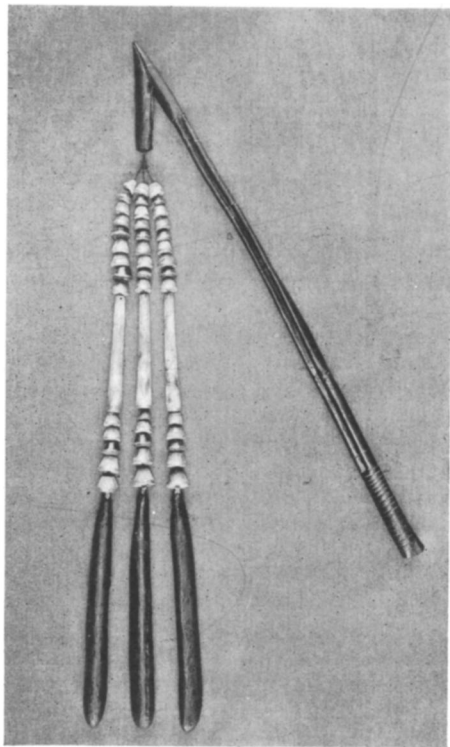


FIG. 8. CEREMONIAL WHIP OF SENBTET

the cemetery yielded both important facts regarding tomb-construction during this twelfth dynasty and also a considerable number of other objects illustrating various sides of Egyptian art at this period. The results of the work have now reached the Museum and will be placed on exhibition as early in the autumn as possible. A. M. L.